

Letter from Alexander Graham Bell to Mabel Hubbard Bell, July 17, 1878, with transcript

ALEXANDER GRAHAM BELL TO MABEL (Hubbard) BELL 57 West Cromwell Rd., S. W.
July 17th, 1878. My sweet wife:

I have just reached home after a hard day's work hunting up M.P.'s with Mr. Scott — and empty and desolate home looks without you and my baby and family.

The Post Office yesterday through the Governmental Solicitor, (Mr. Ashurst) offered to insert a clause offering us compensation and we had a Board meeting this morning to consider the course to be pursued under the circumstances. Our Solicitor informed the Board this morning that the Solicitor of the Post Office now refused to do anything and he, (the Solicitor of Post Office) elegantly added that we might “go to the d—I” if we chose!! So you see it is to be war to the knife. The Postmaster General has agreed today to receive a deputation tomorrow afternoon at 3 o'clock — so we have been busy hunting up M.P.'s to accompany us. We hope to secure Dr. Lyon Playfair as our spokesman and I have arranged to meet him tomorrow morning at half-past nine. At half past ten I am to see Mr. Blennerhassett and at eleven o'clock Sir Charles Dilke and Sir Charles Reed.

It was decided this morning that the public agitation should continue and I am to figure in place of the Company. The public will probably be more inclined to sympathize with the Inventor than with a Company whose only interest would be a pecuniary one.

You will probably see in tomorrow morning's papers a letter from me- which was the joint production of the solicitors (Ashurst Morris and Co.) and of the Board.

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I contributed three words to the document and they were the words “Alexander Graham Bell” — However I think the letter a good one - 2 very well expressed — and to the point — so I am not ashamed to have my name attached.

The Telegraph's Bill is to come before the House tomorrow evening so I must be there. We do not know what time it will be brought on but guess it will be pretty late perhaps not before nine or ten at night. It is more than probable that I shall have to remain here all night tomorrow — but if the Bill is brought in early and disposed of quickly — I shall come out by a late train. Did your Mamma go to Sudbury I wonder, and what have you decided on? Things are looking brighter at the office. I should not be at all surprised if in a few days we should have a complete change. Not at all unlikely Mr. McClure will disappear — and Mr. Scott be installed in his place!! I have been requested — to obtain Telephone from America — and this parliamentary struggle is directing attention to the Central office system which the Post Office threatens to extinguish.

By the bye, I have just received private intelligence that the Paris award has been granted to me. I enclose letter from Morgan Brown. I can do nothing in the matter. I will send him cheque for £150 and tell him I can afford no more just now.

My darling I wish I could have you here — but I am so low—spirited that it is just as well perhaps that I am away from you all.

Kiss my little baby for me — and I wish I could kiss her mother myself. Love to all.

Your loving husband, Alec.